

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 009032

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, FR, US

SUBJECT: -FRENCH MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON
ARMAMENTSCOOPERATION AND RELATED SECURITY OF INFORMATION
AGREEMENT

REFS: (A) PARIS 77-29842 AND (B) STATE 77-267728

1. FRENCH EMBASSY DEFENSE RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING ATTACHE
MICHEL DISCUSSED WITH A DEPARTMENT OFFICER ON JANUARY 10
THE CONTENT AND PROCEDURE IN REPORTING EXECUTIVE AGREEMENTS
TO THE CONGRESS UNDER THE CASE ACT. HE DID SO AT THE
SUGGESTION OF DEFENSE, IN CONNECTION WITH THE IMPENDING
MOU ON ARMAMENTS COOPERATION. WE PROVIDED TO HIM, AS AN
EXAMPLE, THE EXPLANATORY STATEMENT REGARDING THE U.S.-
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FRENCH SECURITY OF INFORMATION AGREEMENT SIGNED LAST
SEPTEMBER, WHICH WAS SUBMITTED TO THE CONGRESS UNDER A
COVERING LETTER. RECEIPT OF THE COVERING LETTER WAS
MENTIONED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, AND WAS THEN
FILED WITH THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE WITHOUT PUBLISHED
REFERENCE TO THE SUBJECT OF THE EXPLANATORY NOTE. MICHEL
IS REPORTING ALL THIS TO PARIS.

2. MICHEL CONFIRMED THAT THE FRENCH ARE READY FOR EARLY SIGNATURE OF THE MOU AND ARE CONCERNED ONLY ABOUT POSSIBLE PUBLICITY REGARDING ITS CONTENTS, WHICH MIGHT BE EXPLOITED ADVERSELY DURING THE FRENCH ELECTION CAMPAIGN. HE WILL REPORT THE SUGGESTION TO PARIS THAT THE MOU BE SIGNED AS AN UNCLASSIFIED AGREEMENT WITH A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS THAT THE MOU WILL BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL SUCH TIME AS IMPLEMENTING ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. HE ANTICIPATED THAT THIS PROCESS WOULD TAKE ABOUT SIXTY DAYS, WHICH WOULD GET THE MATTER BEYOND THE SENSITIVE PERIOD. THE DEPARTMENT WOULD ALSO HAVE SIXTY DAYS TO REPORT THE MOU TO THE CONGRESS UNDER THE CASE ACT AND COULD THUS REPORT IT AS AN UNCLASSIFIED AGREEMENT.

3. MICHEL THOUGHT THAT THE MATTER OF CONCERN TO THE FRENCH COULD BE ACCOMMODATED IF THE GOVERNMENTS WOULD SAFEGUARD THE AGREEMENT IN THIS MANNER OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS WITHOUT ACTUALLY CLASSIFYING THE MOU. MICHEL ALSO BELIEVED THAT THE GOF WOULD AGREE TO CIRCULATE THE MOU TO OTHER NATO DELEGATIONS ON THE CONDITION THAT IT WOULD BE FOR GOVERNMENT INFORMATION ONLY, AND THAT NO GOVERNMENT WOULD DISCUSS IT WITH THE PRESS.

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4. ON THE SECURITY OF INFORMATION AGREEMENT, WHICH IS IMPORTANT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOU, MICHEL RECOGNIZED THAT THE SEPTEMBER 1977 AGREEMENT IS TO BE SUPPLEMENTED BY A PROCEDURAL AGREEMENT, ON WHICH DRAFT THE U.S. HAS BEEN AWAITING FRENCH COMMENTS. HE UNDERTOOK TO ENCOURAGE THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE, THE COORDINATING AGENCY IN PARIS, TO PROVIDE SUCH COMMENTS. CHRISTOPHER

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